

Message Text

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TO AMEMBASSY DUBLIN
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C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 173283

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, MILI, EI, UK, US

SUBJECT: VISIT OF IRISH MINISTER OF DEFENSE

1. MINISTER OF DEFENSE, IRELAND, PATRICK S. DONEGAN, MADE COURTESY CALL ON SECRETARY OF DEFENSE DONALD RUMSFELD ON 9 JULY. IRISH AMBASSADOR TO US JOHN G. MOLLOY ACCOMPANIED DONEGAN.

2. MAIN SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES TOUCHED ON WERE IRISH DEFENSE POLICY, NORTHERN IRELAND, AND EUROPEAN SECURITY. DONEGAN REAFFIRMED IRISH BELIEF THAT IRELAND'S CONTRIBUTION TO GLOBAL SECURITY AND STABILITY IS ENHANCED BY ITS REMAINING MILITARILY UNCOMMITTED. HE REGRETTED THAT GOVERNMENT WAS FORCED TO BRING PEACEKEEPING FORCES HOME TO SUPPORT CIVIL POWER AGAINST SUBVERSION BUT EXPRESSED HOPE IRISH TROOPS COULD RETURN TO UN PEACEKEEPING DUTIES AS AND WHEN IRISH
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SITUATION IMPROVES. HE SEES SIGNS THAT PROTESTANT EXTREMISTS

IN NORTHERN IRELAND ARE BECOMING ISOLATED AS PEOPLE CONCLUDE THAT THINGS "CANNOT GO ON AS AT PRESENT."

3. DONEGAN VOLUNTARILY REAFFIRMED IRELAND'S POLICY NOT TO JOIN NATO OR ANY EXISTING MILITARY ALLIANCE, BUT TO JOIN ITS EC PARTNERS IN A DEFENSE ARRANGEMENT IF THAT SHOULD DEVELOP IN THE FUTURE. SECRETARY RUMSFELD EXPRESSED BELIEF

THAT AS EUROPEAN COUNTRIES, IN AND OUT OF NATO, BECAME MORE AWARE OF SOVIET MILITARY BUILDUP, THEY WILL CONCLUDE THAT CONTINUATION OF PRESENT TRENDS IS UNACCEPTABLE AND INCREASE, RATHER THAN CUT, THEIR DEFENSE BUDGETS. KISSINGER

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